

9. The etching method according to claim 3, wherein a flow of etchant is provided at a flow rate which produces a flow [rate] diverging position that is internal to an outer periphery of an object being etched.

10. The etching method according to claim 4, wherein a flow of etchant is provided at a flow rate which produces a flow [rate] diverging position that is internal to an outer periphery of an object being etched.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the Final Office Action of April 24, 2000 and entry of the above identified application is respectfully requested.

The above amendments to claims 7-10 have been made to remove the word "rate" in the context of the phrase "flow [rate] diverging position" presented in the last amendment. Thus, the flow, itself, is designated as diverging rather than the flow rate (as shown in the figure sheets 8/9 and 9/9 of the present invention). This change is clarifying in nature and not considered to introduce new issues. Entry of the present after final amendment is respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action claims 1-6 and 11-14 were rejected as being unpatentable over Collins ('501) in view of Szwejkowski et al. ('398). It is recognized in the obviousness rejection of claims 1-6 and 11-14 that "Collins differs from the claimed invention as per claim 1 by supplying etching gas of Chlorine at a flow rate of 50 cc instead of an etching gas supply rate of 8.4 sccm or above for a substantial volume of one liter of the processing chamber as claimed in the instant invention." It is indicated in the Office Action that it is believed that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the flow rate for the etching gas (13.3 sccm/L) in Szwejkowski et al.'s